

Introductions to Essays

An introduction to an essay should include a **thesis statement** which can appear anywhere in the opening paragraph. Often, it appears *after* an attention-grabbing lead. Notice the placement of the thesis statement in the following paragraph.

I remember the day we got our first dog. I went down to the animal shelter with my father. After looking at a few different animals, we found a friendly brown and white mutt who seemed like a perfect match. From that day on, Jethro was a permanent part of the family. My experience is one that many others have shared. **Dogs are still one of America's most popular pets.**

The writer opens with an anecdote as a lead.

The thesis statement introduces the main ideas.

The writer could also have begun . . .	Example
. . . with a quotation	"Whoever said you can't buy happiness forgot about puppies." So says the writer Gene Hill . . .
. . . with an intriguing fact	There are about 65 million pet dogs in the United States.
. . . by posing a question	Are dogs still man's best friend? They are in the United States!
. . . by addressing the reader directly	If you have a dog as a pet, you're in good company. Almost 40% of U.S. households have at least one dog.
. . . with vivid description	In one cage, a dignified looking Airedale stalked back and forth. In another, two brown-eyed, sad-faced beagles looked out longingly. Crowded around the cages were groups of excited children.